

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the subject application as amended. In response to the Office Action mailed 3/15/05, Applicant is filing this amendment. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, 18-22, 24, 26-28, 30, 32, 33 and 35-45 are still pending.

In the Office Action mailed 3/15/05, the Examiner has rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagersten et al. (U.S. Patent 5,987,549; "Hagersten") in view of Lomelino et al. (U.S. Patent 5,867,675; "Lomelino"). Applicant submits that Hagersten and/or Lomelino fail to disclose the elements of the independent claims, as amended.

The Examiner has maintained that Hagersten discloses an agent that is given a default grant. The Examiner has noted, as an example, that board 0 in Hagersten is a default winner when there are no requests from other boards. However, Applicant submits that the default winner in Hagersten is chosen by participating in arbitration. A round-robin arbitration method ensures that one circuit board will always be a default winner and if there are requests from boards other than the default winner, a new default winner is chosen (column 7, lines 55-67 of Hagersten). Thus, Applicant submits that Hagersten discloses the selection of default agents by use of round-robin arbitration, in which new default winners are chosen. The embodiments of the invention, claimed in the amended independent claims, recite selection of only one predetermined default agent, in which the default grant is given independent of an arbitration priority scheme employed by the plurality of agents. The default agent may participate in the arbitration priority scheme, but the grant of the default is independent of such arbitration priority scheme.

The Examiner has cited Lomelino to teach where the default agent is fixed. In Lomelino, the arbiter asserts the grant signal to a selected device for the purpose of "arbitration parking" or the arbiter can choose not to park at all. Arbitration parking allows the arbiter to safely park the bus at some device and know that the bus will not float, when no device is currently using the bus. If the arbiter does not park the bus at some device, the central resource device in which the arbiter is embedded typically drives the bus (col. 6, lines 36-49 of Lomelino).

Unlike Lomelino, the default agent of the claimed embodiments of the invention is predetermined and the default grant is given independent of the arbitration priority scheme. Further, the grant of the bus to the default agent is provided, not for the purpose of arbitration parking, but to allow for transfer of information between the one default agent and the bus when the bus is free. The default grant is always provided to the default agent and not determined by the arbiter if arbitration parking is to be implemented, or not implemented.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Hagersten and Lomelino, singly or combined, fail to disclose the embodiments of the invention as claimed in the amended claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection and allow pending claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, 18-22, 24, 26-28, 30, 32, 33 and 35-45, as amended.

If there are any fee shortages related to this response, please charge such fee shortages to Deposit Account No. 50-2126.

Respectfully submitted,

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37 C.F.R 1.8

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